

## Chapter III

# Key Projects for Wallingford

The following projects have been grouped and identified as “key projects” by Team Wallingford. Though they are the key strategies which the city has invited the community to identify for priority consideration, they are not all the projects the community considers important. There are many other important projects in this Plan.

## I. Revitalize and Enhance the 45th Street Business District

The Wallingford community especially values the small, locally owned businesses that line the primary shopping district along N 45th St. Several plan elements examine and recommend steps to be taken to insure its continued economic vitality, and enhance its position as the heart of a “small town in the big city.” These recommendations, taken together, are perhaps the highest priority in the community. They include:

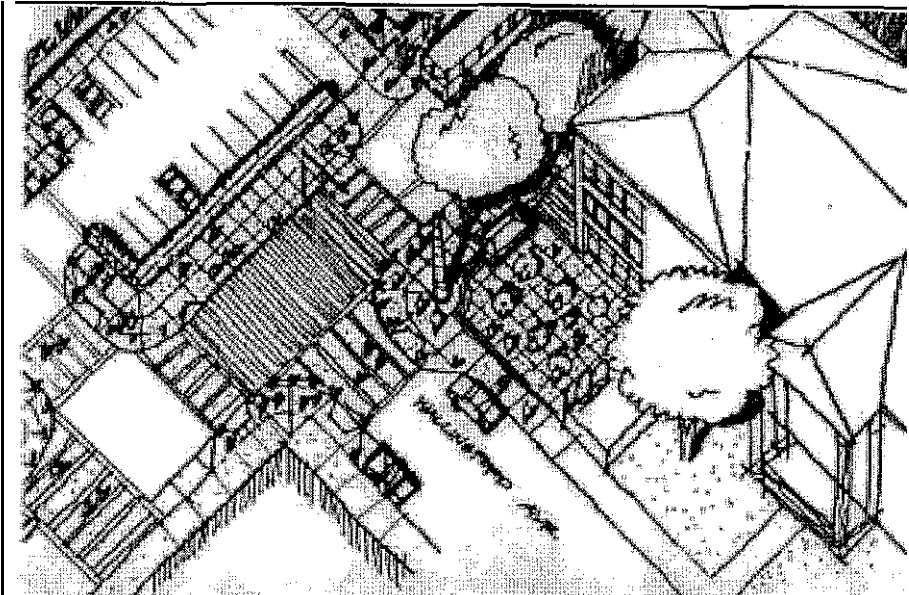


Figure III-1: Bird's eye view of N. 45<sup>th</sup> & Wallingford Ave. “place making” proposal

- Designation of the Wallingford Urban Village. (UV-1; H-1) In this area it is essential to provide viable ground floor commercial space in all new developments within commercial zones. (UV-2.3)
- Signs on I-5 exits at N 50th and N 45th streets (and on

Stone Way and N 46th coming from Ballard) directing through traffic onto the 50th Street Corridor and local shopping traffic onto the 45th Street Corridor. (TR -2, TR - 4)

- Expediting a series, of modest 45th Street Corridor transportation enhancements to encourage pedestrian use, transit access, and bicycles. (TR -4)
- . *The 45th Street identity /placemaking project*, creating an urban plaza at 45th St. and Wallingford Ave. and using art and other identifiers to create a coherent image of the area. (BH-4;TR-4)
- As part of the 45<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor plan, developing a parking management association and sharing parking resources along N 45th (BH-2) to solve the main perceived problem with the Wallingford business district - parking. In the future, the neighborhood may possibly reconsider the feasibility of a parking structure along this Corridor.
- . Steps to increase business cohesiveness and vitality. (BH-5)
- . Exploring a Business Improvement Area (BH Strategy #1) to increase Chamber of Commerce viability, visibility, and health. (BH-5)

## II. Build the Sense and Value of the Community

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The WEaving Wallingford concept (see Chapter VIII, Community Building) is an innovative approach to building community, holding it together, and getting things done. It is not only a key *integrated* activity, it is the key *integrating* activity for neighborhood collaboration and Plan stewardship building on the outcomes of this planning effort and promoting continued strategic planning for growth. WEaving Wallingford hopes to break down the anonymity of the city and create a sense of shared values and common destiny that characterizes smaller communities. This can largely be achieved through improved communication and projects and events that bring neighbors together for friendship, fun, and the benefit of the neighborhood.

WEaving Wallingford is a multi-pronged effort to link all elements of the community - residents, organizations, business groups, human service providers, neighborhood resources, and even City Hall through a series of five separate "networks" coordinated from a central office in the 45<sup>th</sup> St. business district. Proposed activities have been carefully chosen to carry out the community's expressed desires for more of a "small town" feeling, while producing other desirable outcomes such as neighborhood inclusiveness and increased civic engagement.

A start-up grant to get this project in motion immediately is a high priority in order to continue our forward progress. Many of the WEaving Wallingford elements - a Web site, e-news, projects and events, better relationships with City Departments, and the 1,500 member (and growing) community-contact list - are in place right now; but they'll fade away without a way to sustain and nurture them.

The concept also calls for a commitment from within City Departments to continue the City-Neighborhood teamwork that began as a result of neighborhood planning. As soon as possible, the City should consider providing staffing changes, perhaps a City "ombudsman", rotating Departmental contacts, or other designated liaison who would help Wallingford navigate City Hall when the Neighborhood Planning Office goes away. At the same time, we hope the City explores the potentials for neighborhood empowerment that has grown out of planning, perhaps by finding a way to foster the creation of a WEaving Wallingford-like organization in every City neighborhood so we can all grow strong together.

Team Wallingford has chosen the establishment of WEaving Wallingford's community office as the preferred use of our early implementation funding. The proposed office space is intended to be shared with the Community Council and the Chamber of Commerce, filling an enormous need in a neighborhood without any permanent community work spaces. The office, together with the overlapping leadership among the Council, Chamber, and WEaving Wallingford (see diagram of organizational structure in Chapter VIII) will build neighborhood strength by allowing many activities to become joint projects of the three organizations working as a team. Among the most important of these is stewardship over the Neighborhood Plan. Given the immediacy of the need for such an organization, and the substantial benefits to be gained, we're confident this is our wisest choice.

### III. Calm Traffic and Enhance the Pedestrian Environment

Traffic calming and enhancing pedestrian access throughout the neighborhood consistently rose to the top of most surveys, both in terms of issues people complained about most, and solutions that were rated most highly. One of the highest impacts the community faces is the prevalence of automobile traffic and its current supremacy on the roadways. The Wallingford neighborhood would like to enhance the vision of the Urban Village as a place where it is pleasant to walk and use alternate transportation, where streetscapes are lively, friendly places, and where roadways serve as public access for walkers, bikers, and transit users as well as for cars.

Key to this re-design of the neighborhood are incremental improvements that result in greater pedestrian access and sense of safety throughout the neighborhood. We have grouped several projects that, taken together, represent some of the highest priority projects identified by the community. These include:

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

- Implement "Wallingford Steps" project --a pedestrian connection from the south end of Wallingford Ave to Gas Works Park (near-term).
- Install a pedestrian signal at NE 50th St, and 1st Ave NE (near-term).
- Design and install pedestrian crossings and refuges at N 46th and N 47th intersections with Stone Way N (near-term and mid-term).

#### Traffic Calming

- Design and install traffic control devices to reduce speeds on:
  - . Latona Ave NE and Thackeray Pl. NE between NE 42nd and NE 50th streets (near-term).
  - . 5th Ave NE, south of NE 45th St. (near-term).
  - . N 46th St. between Meridian Ave N and Stone Way N (near-term). Consider angle parking.
  - . N/NE 47th St. between Green Lake Way N and Stone Way N and between Meridian Ave N and 5th Ave NE (near-term).
  - . N/NE 56th St. between Meridian Ave N and Latona Ave NE (near-term).
- Improve signal at N 50th St., Stone Way N, and Green Lake Way N to avoid delays and reduce cut-through traffic on adjoining residential streets (near-term),

- Consider extending 5th Ave NE from NE 42nd St. to NE 40th St. (going under the freeway) to reduce traffic near Latona School (mid-term).

The southern portion of Wallingford, along the Lake Union waterfront, did not receive as much attention during the planning process; in large part this was because there is a stable land pattern of predominantly single-family homes from N. 45th St. to N. 34<sup>th</sup> St., and from I-5 to Stone Way. However, the Wallingford Steps project — an improvement that would link the bluffs along 34th Ave N with the shoreline and the Burke-Gilman Trail at Gas Works Park received high ratings in the “Money Game” prioritizing activity.